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An outline of the implications for the Louisiana bilingual program of the Quebec-Louisiana Agreement on Cultural Cooperation is presented. In December 1967, a submission was addressed to the State Superintendent and also to the Special Legislative Committee, proposing a partial revival of the use of French as a language of instruction in Louisiana, particularly in Acadiana (Acadia). It is now, the author points out, "the stated policy of the United States Government to preserve special language potential within the country, with a view to furthering this nation's business abroad." South Louisiana, with its "large oral-Francophone population," he feels, "is in an excellent position to serve the United States in this respect, if we develop our potential to include widespread knowledge of the written language." The author comments briefly on the state agencies and institutions which have expressed interest in a bilingual program and closer relationships with their French-Canadian counterparts. A short description of the Quebec-Louisiana Agreement is also presented. See related document AL 001 251. (AMM)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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PREPARED TEXT OF REMARKS AT THE (FIRST) FRENCH-ACADIAN CONFERENCE OF THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, JANUARY 20, 1968, BY PROF RAYMOND RODGERS (CHAIRMAN, LTDC COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL ACCORDS; AIDE-DE-CAMP, GOVERNOR'S STAFF):

I am happy to outline the implications (for the Louisiana bilingual program) of the Quebec-Louisiana Agreement on Cultural Cooperation and other similar possible measures.

First I would observe that it speaks volumes when a conference of the present scope is called together and slated to hear State Superintendent Bill Dodd on 'BILINGUALISM, AN ASSET, NOT A SET-BACK!'

Today I shall repeat briefly a report which, last month, was given at greater length (and off-the-record) to the Foreign Languages Advisory Council. By the way, it is suggested we change the title of that body-and also that of our conference organizer-to 'French and Foreign Languages'. French is not a foreign language in Louisiana. It may be residual and somewhat dormant, but is in fact an official language in this State-as a legal historian will tell you, if he has researched the matter. (It will be used in the next legislative session).

On the fifteenth of last month, a submission was addressed to the State Superintendent and also the Special Legislative Committee, proposing a partial revival of the use of French as a language of instruction in Louisiana, particularly Acadiana. As you know, it is now the stated policy of the United States Government to preserve special language potential within the country, with a view to furthering this nation's business abroad. As an aside, I would suggest we badly need to communicate with French-speaking people abroad at this time, particularly in view of certain misunderstandings which seem current. South Louisiana, with its large oral-Francophone population, is in an excellent position

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to serve the United States in this respect, if we develop our potential to include widespread knowledge of the written language.

One of the implications of the Spanish-bilingual program in Texas is surely this: our linguistic 'fragment' populations require enriching cultural relations with a larger outside group - preferably also in the Americas. The Texas program is enriched by the contiguity of Mexico. The nearest similar situation for Louisiana is the cultural vigor of French Canada. I hardly need enlarge upon this for anybody who flew (in a few hours) or drove (in a few days' journey) to EXPO '67.

This, then, is the context of Senate Concurrent Resolution 64; of the Quebec-Louisiana Agreement on Cultural Cooperation; and related developments. SCR 64, passed by our legislature last year, endorsed closer relationships with Canada and its Provinces. It provided the legal and inspirational basis for subsequent measures.

As a consequence of SCR 64, which was adopted unanimously following consultation with the Governor's Office, a wide variety of state agencies and institutions have expressed interest in closer relationships with Canadian counterparts. These include the Louisiana Tourist Development Commission, a number of the colleges and universities, State Archives and Records Commission, Department of Education, and others. A few are preparing substantial programs. On the Canadian side there have been expressions of some interest from the Department of Trade and Commerce, Canadian Government Travel Bureau, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, National Film Board, Ontario Department of Education, Quebec Ministry of Cultural Affairs, University of Moncton, Laval University, and others. Noteworthy have been the scholarship activities of the Quebec Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs, and the curriculum materials collaboration of the Ontario Department of Education.

In view of this modest but growing collaboration, one may well wonder why there would be any need for formal accords such as the Quebec-Louisiana Agreement? Certainly the future of such collaboration depends upon vigorous direct agency-to-agency/institution-to-institution arrangements! On the other hand, framework-accords provide a valuable point of focus, a psychological or promotional aspect, which a hodge-podge of little-known arrangements cannot provide. The really serious planning taking place in Louisiana-Canada relationships at this time is planning predicated upon the conclusion of an accord.

Before commenting briefly upon the terms of the Quebec-Louisiana Agreement, I should let you know where it stands at this time. Senator Russell Long, Representative Edwin Willis, and Representative Edwin Edwards, are presently submitting the Agreement for Congressional consent and I am informed that the consent resolution has been accepted, as sufficient to initiate the matter, by the Chairman of an appropriate Congressional committee. As you know, Representative Willis is from St. Martinville and speaks our good Acadian French. I believe Representative Edwards also has this ability. Senator Long may not speak Acadian French, but he speaks good common sense and he knows that <u>Acadians</u> are valuable Americans. These three gentlemen deserve much credit for working so hard with Washington authorities on our behalf.

I hardly need tell this Conference how devoted to all of Louisiana, including Acadiana, is our beloved Governor John McKeithen. He took it upon his firm shoulders to authorize the negotiation of this Agreement and he will be the one to sign it, or delegate signature, when Congress gives consent (and he has already accepted it in principle). Thereafter, it will be deposited in the archives of our Secretary of State, Wade Martin, who steered this Agreement during the early years of its negotiations. He too deserves much praise for

his efforts. I should also thank Senator Edgar Mouton, Representative Luke LeBlanc, and particularly State Comptroller Roy Theriot, for help in this general program.

It would be misleading to imply that this Agreement has had plain-sailing all the way. As I have implied earlier, French is not a popular language these days amongst unthinking people. In the heat of affairs, it is an understandable mistake to dislike a language because annoying statements have been made in it. But language may be used in defense, as well as offense! It is good policy to promote cultural, tourist, and consequent legal relationships between Louisiana and other French-speaking jurisdictions in the Americas.

Some of us present at this Conference had the pleasure a few weeks ago of speaking with a member of Canada's Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. He expressed strong interest in, and considerable optimism for, the Quebec-Louisiana Agreement; and hoped it could be matched by further measures.

I shall not expand at length upon the terms of the Quebec-Louisiana Agreement, a copy of which is in your hands. You can readily surmise which agencies and institutions are involved. The plans of the colleges have been widely reported in the press. I would, of course, be glad to answer any questions. However, let me make a few general observations:

By Articles 1 and 3 the Government of Quebec would facilitate the admission of Louisiana students to certain programs in Quebec. In anticipation, Quebec last Summer awarded modest financial assistance to a group of twenty four Louisiana students. By Article 2 we would encourage programs pertaining to the French civilization of America and facilitate the study here of Quebec students. In view of projects new underway, we are in a position to implement this article insofar as higher education institutions are concerned; though I would suggest we need to establish reciprocity with Quebec on waiver of out-of-state fees.

(This would, by the way, be a valuable step towards a needed cosmopolitanization of our inbred student population).

Our situation is much less satisfactory at the junior levels. We teach French in our schools. But to really preserve French we need to instruct in French (which is what this Conference is all about) and we should pay more attention to the geography and history of French-language settlement in the Americas. Summer and other exchanges of students at the secondary level are surely just as important in the implementation of Article 2 as college and university exchanges.

Article 4 would be implemented, on the Louisiana side, by the inclusion of French programming in the forthcoming system of educational broadcasting; and by the materials which will ensue from such programs as the Colonial Records Project at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. I should emphasize, by the way, that USL has announced in the press consideration of an institute for the study of the French-speaking world. The University of Moncton has taken what I must call an informal look at the USL Archives, and held what I must call informal discussions at Nicholls State College. It is not too premature to speculate that an Acadian Studies Institute is a distinct possibility. Obviously, such programs will be doing some publishing in French.

Articles 5 and 7 call for official visits and exhibits (like the Louisiana bilinqual EXPO panorama, now touring the State) in fields which interest a wide range of educators and other persons. In view of President Johnson's call for hemispheric travel, and in view of the attractions of both Louisiana and Quebec, I feel we will have many willing participants as this aspect of our relationship expands!

Article 8 is, for Louisiana, a matter for ready implementation by the Louisiana Tourist Development Commission. To conclude, I would like to say that the Commission deserves praise for its measure of sponsorship in the negotiation of

this Agreement during the past year. The Commission was going through a difficult period of staff changes, and meetings which necessarily concentrated on matters other than my particular concern. I am happy to say that the directing staff of the Commission, and particularly its Chairman, along with the Governor's Office, gave me the leeway required to bring the Agreement to its present status: accepted in principle and, we all hope and trust, at the penultimate stage of formal conclusion.

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For further details see "Capacity of Louisiana to Conclude International Agreements" in 1967 Proceedings of the Louisiana Academy of Sciences.

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